

## GRADUATE BEAR PROJECT



Launched in 2026, the Graduate Bear project is proudly funded by SSNAP and thoughtfully designed by the Shared Decision Making Council, a dedicated group of NHS staff working together to make a meaningful difference.

A special new gift for babies being discharged directly from the Neonatal Care Unit to home. This little bear is more than a keepsake; it's a symbol of strength, resilience, and the beginning of a brand-new chapter. Every tiny graduate has their own incredible journey, and this is our way of saying well done and welcome home.

## SPECIALIST CHAIRS UPDATE



We're delighted to share that the final delivery of specialist chairs for the Neonatal Unit is now complete. Thanks to an investment of £62,099.10, every cot space is now equipped with a specially designed chair to support breastfeeding and kangaroo care.

These chairs are already making a huge difference, improving comfort, promoting closeness, and supporting the wellbeing of families during some of their most precious and challenging moments. Having the right chair at every cot space means parents can focus on bonding with their baby, supported in comfort and dignity.



This incredible achievement would not have been possible without the generosity of our supporters. We are deeply thankful to every single person who fundraised or donated towards this project. Your kindness has created a lasting impact for babies and families, today and for years to come.

## JADE'S STORY



My name is Jade Routley. My wife and I had a baby girl at 27+1 weeks weighing just 1lb 3oz (630g). She spent a considerable amount of time in NICU, which is scary for any parent. However SSNAP were there for us and offered tremendous support. They came into the NICU every day to give us snacks and check how we



were doing. They were also there to listen to us and offered support throughout. Our daughter, Winter-Pearl, is now two years old and thriving. If it wasn't for SSNAP, we would never have got through it. Please continue to support this amazing charity!

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# SSNAP newsletter

Estd. 1982

Support for the Sick Newborn and their Parents

SPRING 2026

**Welcome** to our Spring 2026 SSNAP Newsletter. This edition offers just a small glimpse into our work, and we encourage you to visit our website and follow us on social media to stay up to date with all things SSNAP throughout the year.

In 2025, our incredible Family Care Team provided 4,004 hours of peer-to-peer support, ensuring families never felt alone on their neonatal journey. Vicky delivered 69 Little SSNAPlings classes, supporting families as they transitioned from the neonatal environment, and we invested over £12,000 in training for our NHS colleagues.

We really hope you'll join us at one of our many events this year and help us continue to make a real difference to the lives of babies and families.

We send a heartfelt thank you to all of our incredible supporters. Your generosity, encouragement, and belief in SSNAP make everything we do possible.

With very best wishes

Team SSNAP x



## A BEAUTIFUL TRANSFORMATION FOR OUR EXPRESSING ROOMS



Thanks to an incredibly generous legacy donation, SSNAP has been able to invest in several larger projects over the last few months. This includes a makeover for our expressing rooms.

The photos already show what a difference these improvements are making. These rooms have been refreshed to create a calmer, more welcoming space for parents during what can be an emotional and exhausting time. The addition of beautiful wallpaper from Croysde Medical has already transformed the look and feel of the rooms, and we are currently awaiting delivery of the new mood lighting with Bluetooth connection to complete the finishing touches. We are excited for the rooms to be fully completed.

Most importantly, this transformation is helping to create a more inviting environment for mothers to express milk for their babies, offering greater comfort, privacy, and a space that feels supportive and nurturing.

We are so grateful to the donor whose legacy has made this possible, and proud to be able to fund projects like this that directly enhance the experience of families on the unit.



Estd. 1982

Support for the Sick Newborn and their Parents

SUPPORT • CARING • COMPASSION • FAMILY • TOGETHERNESS

## A LOVELY AUTUMN/WINTER TERM AT LITTLE SSNAPLINGS

Our weekly **Baby Massage** sessions in Botley, alongside our twice-monthly sessions in Thame, have continued to bring families together in a warm and welcoming environment. We've supported parents at different stages of their journeys, creating a space where families can connect, share if they wish, and feel understood.

Over the term, we took time to acknowledge and honour important moments and milestones. We marked **Neonatal Awareness Day** by creating green footprint canvases, and on **World Prematurity Day** we had a purple themed class and reflected on how far our remarkable babies have come. These sessions offered families the opportunity to share experiences and find reassurance in others who understand. We ended the year with a special Christmas-themed session, where families created handprint baubles and enjoyed festive photo opportunities together.

This term also introduced our first ever **Little SSNAPling graduations**, as three families returned to work after attending sessions since the beginning of 2025. It has been a privilege to support these families and to continue SSNAP's care and connection out in the community.



Oscar graduating Little SSNAPlings

We were also pleased to welcome **Suzanne**, our new **baby yoga teacher**, who took over from the lovely Georgie. Her classes encourage gentle movement and stretching, supporting parental wellbeing and self-care. Babies are

always welcome to join in, and Vicky is on hand to support and entertain little ones when parents would like time to focus on themselves. Each class is thoughtfully adapted to suit families on the day.

We warmly welcome neonatal families to join our Little SSNAPlings classes whenever they feel ready. All sessions are fully funded by SSNAP and are designed to offer a relaxed, supportive space for families. Sessions can be booked via the Little SSNAPling section of the SSNAP website, or by scanning the QR code here. You can attend as many sessions as you wish and tailor the frequency to suit your family. We hope to welcome you soon.



Book a class here!

## A DAD'S JOURNEY



**Our son Ashton was born on 9 December 2025, surprising us with his arrival 10 weeks early – his due date was 12 February. In our minds we thought, get Christmas out of the way and then we can really start planning for his arrival. He had other ideas!**

Throughout our journey here at the JR from ICU into HDU and finally onto LDU, SSNAP have been with us. Their kindness and support has been a lifeline to us. From

food packages to premature baby clothes, they have been on hand to help us in any way they can.

As a husband, and now father(!), I tried hard to be the rock and support my wife and son in any way I could through this strange time. We went along to the Christmas coffee morning and met other couples and families. We were treated to an epic Christmas buffet put on by Crissi. Speaking to other families, especially

around Christmas, really helped me to see we were not alone on this journey and that there really is light at the end of the tunnel. Speaking with other dads helped to normalise the situation for me at a time when everything felt so up in the air, all facilitated by SSNAP.

I wanted to say a special thank you to Crissi who really went above and beyond to help us personally through a low spell. Her kindness and generosity really has no limits and we will always be grateful for everything she and the SSNAP team have done for us.

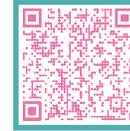
As a keen runner and triathlete, I was more than happy to sign up for the Oxford half marathon, Blenheim Fun Run and any future events that come up too. I will be first in line to give anything back to this amazing charity. We are still in LDU and will hopefully be heading home soon with our little boy to start the next chapter. Thank you SSNAP!

## OUR NEW CHAIR OF TRUSTEES, LUKE FROUDE

SSNAP is delighted to announce the appointment of Luke Froude as the charity's new Chair of Trustees.



READ MORE:



**Luke Froude** and his wife Gemma have been tireless supporters of SSNAP since their son Finnley's birth in 2010. Finnley spent 125 days in the Neonatal Unit and in his memory the family's fundraising efforts have been nothing short of extraordinary. In 2016, they welcomed their son Henry, who was also spent time on the unit. Over the past sixteen years, the Froude family, have raised more than £125,000 for SSNAP.

*"I have personally been deeply thankful for SSNAP's support with both our boys. I was very grateful 9 years ago to be asked to be on the board. I am now honoured to be voted in as Chair. Lastly a huge thank you to all of the wonderful SSNAP staff, volunteers and supporters – your work makes such a difference to sick newborns and their parents."*



READ MORE:



Luke succeeds **Kerri Knibbs**, who is stepping down after many years of dedicated service. In a heartfelt message to supporters, Kerri reflected on her 25-year connection with SSNAP, from parent volunteer to Chair of the Board since 2017. She shared her pride in the charity's growth, including the development of permanent staff roles, stronger governance, and a significant increase in fundraising income, enabling SSNAP to support thousands of families in meaningful ways. Following the recent loss of her husband, Simon, Kerri made the difficult decision to step down, thanking supporters for their unwavering kindness and commitment, and sharing her confidence that SSNAP is well placed for the future.

## 2026 EVENTS

We're thrilled to share an exciting lineup of events for this year, whether you're looking for a fun family day, a personal challenge, or a chance to support our charity, there's something for everyone.

### • Blenheim Fun Run • 17 May 2026

Set in the stunning grounds of Blenheim Palace, this much-loved event offers distances for all ages and abilities. It's the perfect way to enjoy a spring day while raising vital funds for SSNAP.

### • Sky Dive for SSNAP Various dates available

For thrill-seekers looking for the ultimate challenge, our 2026 sky dives offer an unforgettable experience. Take the leap, push your limits, and help make a life-changing difference for babies and families.



### • Summer Garden Party 14 June 2026, Horspath, Oxford

A highlight of the SSNAP calendar, our Garden Party is a wonderful opportunity to come together, enjoy beautiful surroundings, and celebrate our incredible supporters in a relaxed and joyful atmosphere.

### • Oxford Half Marathon 11 October 2026

Join Team SSNAP at one of Oxford's most iconic running events. Whether it's your first half marathon or your fifteenth, every mile you run helps support neonatal families when they need it most. Fundraising spaces are still available!



Alongside these headline events, our 2026 calendar also includes many other ways to get involved, from cycling challenges to family-friendly days out. There truly is something for everyone. Looking further ahead, our next SSNAP Charity Dinner will take place in March 2027.

We'd love to see you at one (or more!) of our events. Use this QR code to find out more.

